

MILL POCKET FIRE SALVAGE TIMBER SALE

December 17, 2007

Location of Sale:

- Plains Unit (NWLO) – Approximately 13 air miles north of Hot Springs, Montana.
- Sanders County – Section 36, T24N-R25W
- Trust Distribution – 100% Common Schools
- This fire salvage sale is within the Chippy Creek Fire perimeter.

Sale Volume & Estimated Value:

- The estimated volume is 21,381 tons (3,479 MBF) with an estimated minimum value of \$427,620.00 or \$20.00/ton.
- In addition to the estimated stumpage value, a fee of \$4.44/ton for Forest Improvement would be charged for all merchantable sawlog timber harvested.
- 6.15 tons/MBF is the conversion factor.

Sale & Harvest Treatments:

- This sale consists of 2 harvest units totaling 572 acres.
- Silvicultural prescriptions on the entire sale would be a salvage/seed tree harvest that would remove merchantable trees killed or damaged by the Chippy Creek Fire. Trees infected with bark beetles and dwarf mistletoe would also be removed. Where possible, 5 to 8 healthy, dominant and co-dominant western larch, ponderosa pine, and Douglas-fir trees per acre would be retained. Seedlings would be planted within 1 to 3 years after harvesting in portions of the harvest area where there is no nearby seed source and natural regeneration is unlikely to occur. Other areas within the harvest units where trees survived would be monitored for natural regeneration and planted, if necessary.
- No old growth would be harvested.

Harvest Systems:

- 92% tractor
- 8% skyline

Road Construction:

- Approximately 0.78 miles of new road construction and 1.7 miles of reconstruction are required to access the harvest units. Approximately 6.5 miles of road maintenance is required to upgrade existing roads to meet current BMPs. All currently closed roads and all new roads would be closed to promote wildlife security and reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

Public Involvement & Issues:

- Public involvement was solicited through legal notices published in the *Valley Press* and *Lake County Leader*. Letters were also sent to the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and special interest groups. The public, DNRC specialists and specialists from other agencies helped identify issues. Identified areas of concern were roads, historic / cultural properties, wildlife, soils, hydrology and noxious weeds.

- One public comment was received for this project. A letter from Stoltze Land & Lumber Co. supported the proposed harvest activities.

Public Comments, Issues and Mitigations:

- **Roads:** A transportation system minimizing road miles and meeting Best Management Practices (BMP) has been designed for this project by DNRC. Upon completion of salvage activities, all new and existing roads would be seeded, properly drained, and closed with Kelly humps or have logging slash scattered on them to prevent motorized use.
- **Historic / Cultural Properties:** One potential cultural site (several piles of rocks) has been flagged and would be avoided during harvest activities. Any historic or cultural sites discovered during harvest operations would be protected.
- **Wildlife:** The following measures have been incorporated into the sale plan.

Black-backed Woodpeckers: 56 acres of the project area would be retained in an unharvested condition to provide reserved black-backed woodpecker foraging and nesting habitat. In addition, harvesting would be deferred on the Little Bitterroot parcel (Section 16, 24N, R24W) to provide additional black-backed woodpecker habitat. Contractors would complete the road construction and start logging near the leave patches in order minimize disturbance near those leave patches during the nesting season (April 15- July 1).

Flammulated owls and Pileated Woodpeckers: An average of at least 2 snags and 2 snag recruits would be retained as per ARM 36.11.411. Ponderosa pine, larch, and Douglas-fir will be favored for snag and snag recruits. Where possible, snags would be clumped and located at least 200 yards from open roads.

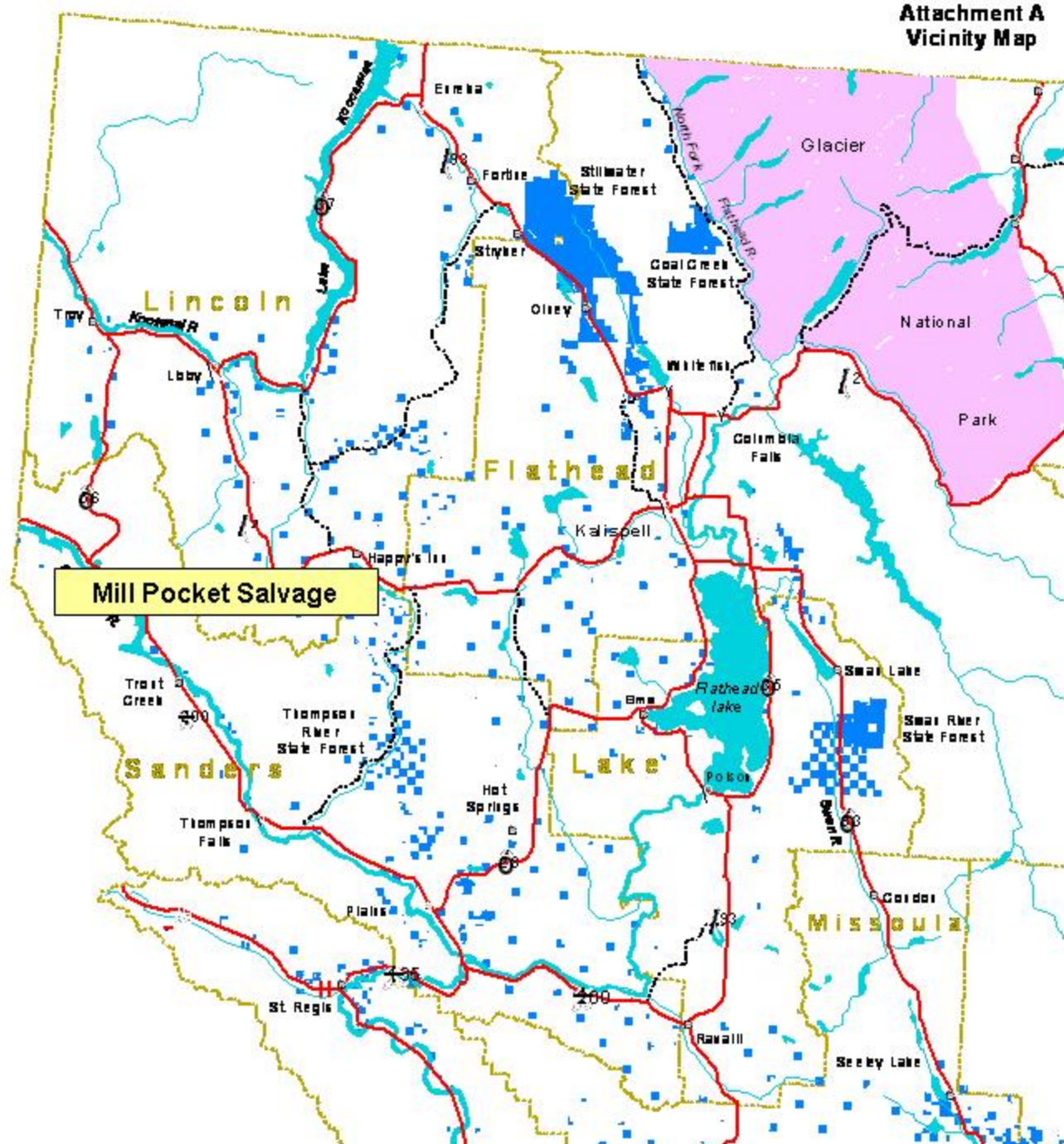
Big Game: Dense patches of conifer regeneration and shrubs would be retained where available and practicable. In addition, roads and skid trails would be closed to limit or prevent motor vehicle use.

- **Soils:** Equipment operations would be limited to periods when soils are relatively dry, frozen, or snow covered to minimize soil compaction and rutting. In areas of moderate to high burn severity, 5-10 sub-merchantable trees per acre would be contour felled to limit soil disturbance, promote nutrient cycling, and enhance moisture retention.
- **Weed Management:** Roads and skid trail approaches would be seeded and spot treated following construction and project completion. Prior to entering the site, off-road logging equipment would be cleaned and inspected to avoid transporting weed seed to the harvest area. Roads would be closed following the sale to avoid migration of weed seed into the area and the area would be included in the Plains Unit's integrated weed management program.

The Director recommends the Land Board direct the Department to sell the Mill Pocket Fire Salvage Timber Sale.

Mill Pocket Salvage S36, T24N, R25W

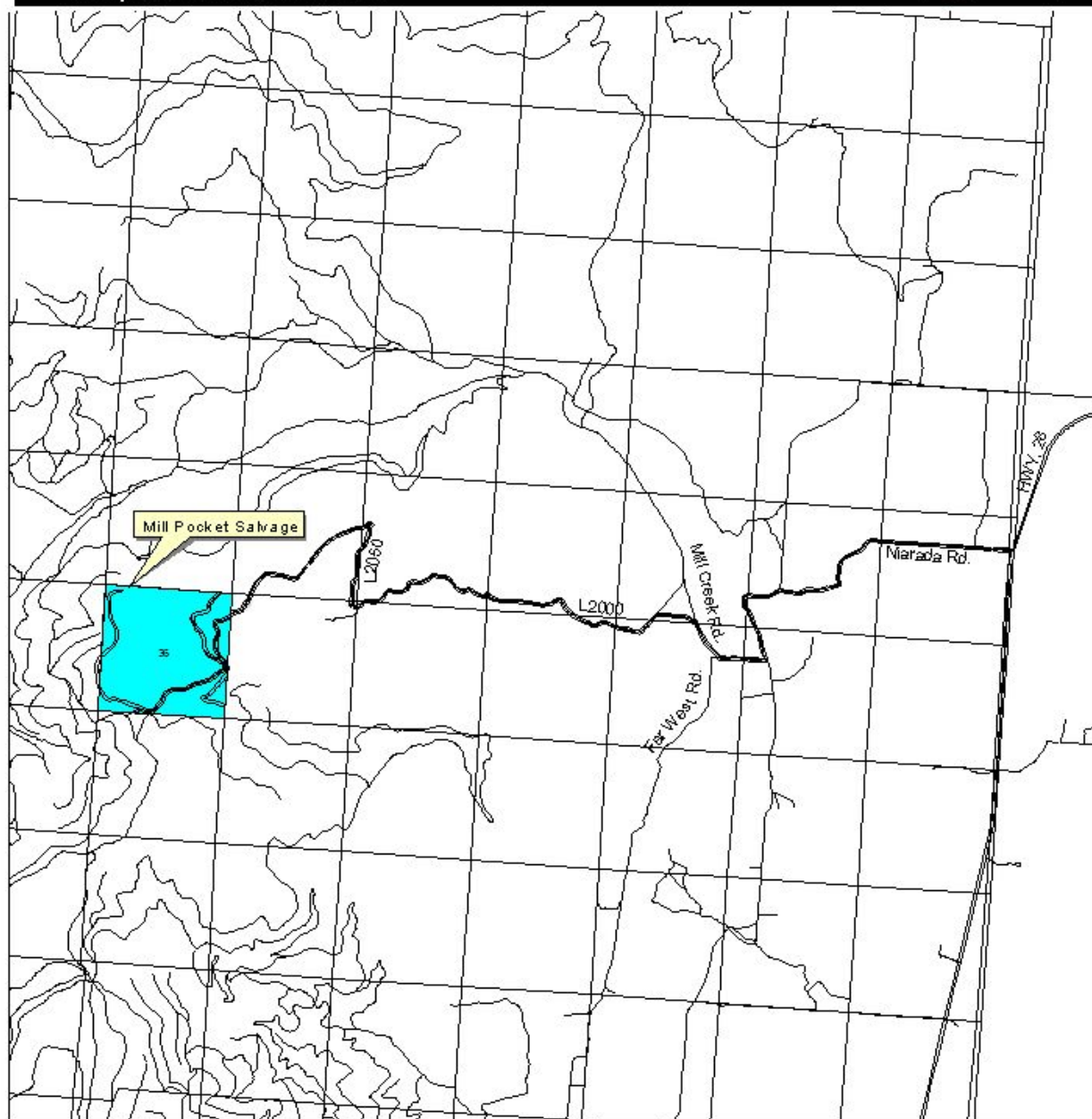
Attachment A Vicinity Map



- Highways
- Other Roads
- County line
- Lakes
- Streams
- State Land

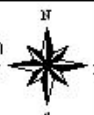
Mill Pocket Salvage

Proposed Haul Route



- Proposed haul route
- Existing Roads**
- Highway/County
- Open, Unimproved Open
- Barement
- Closed
- Reclaimed, Brushed In, Obliterated

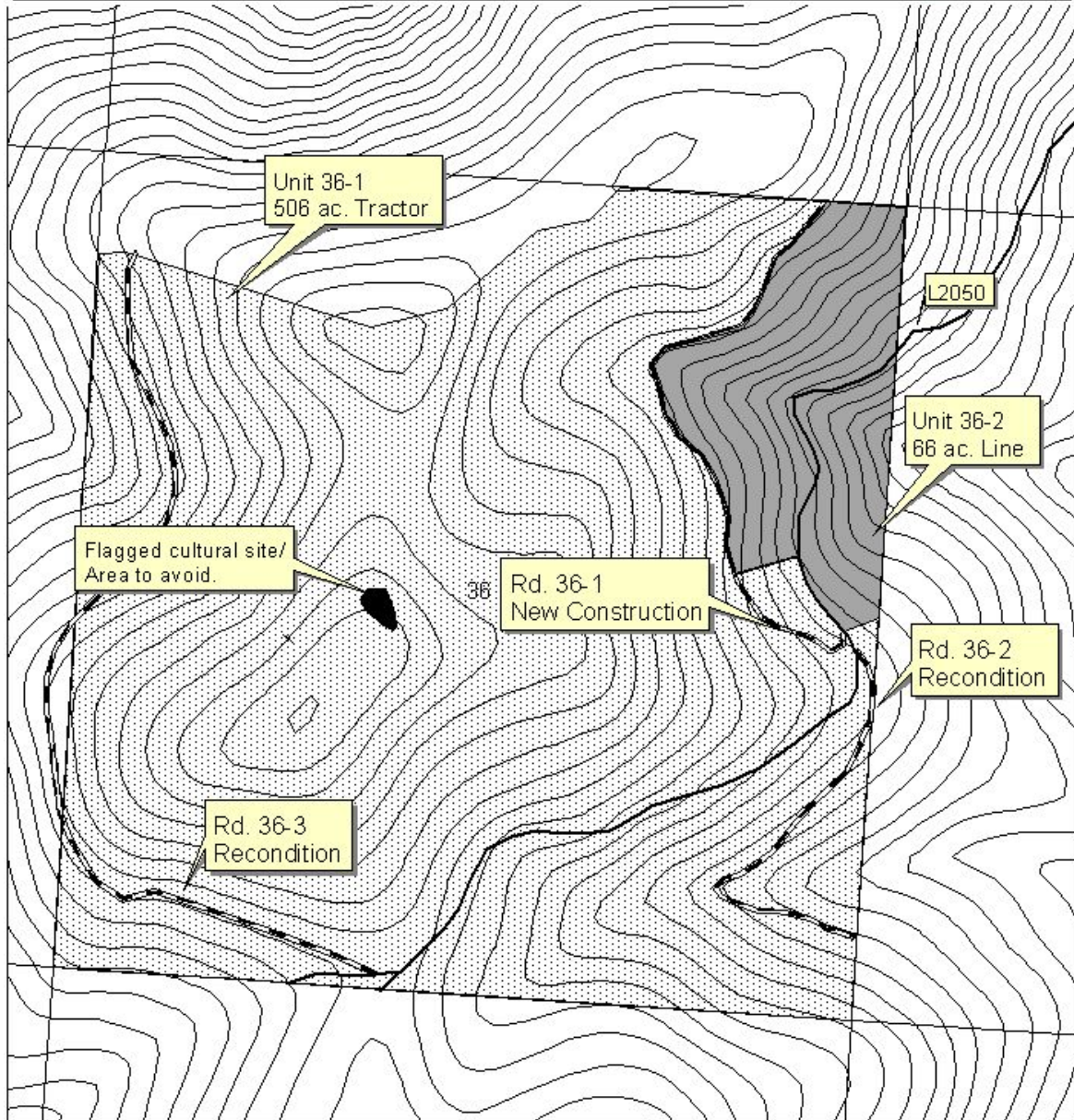
Montana DNRC
Trust Land Management Division
Northwestern Land Office
Plains Unit



0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles
1 : 73,627 1 inch = 1.16 miles

Mill Pocket Salvage, Harvest Plan

S36, T24N, R25W



- Proposed boundary
- Cultural Site
- New Construction
- Recondition
- Unit 36-2, 66 ac.
- Unit 36-1, 506 ac.

Montana DNRC
Trust Land Management Division
Northwestern Land Office
Plains Unit



0.1 0 0.1 0.2 0.3 Miles

1 : 11,405 1 inch = 0.18 miles